CHALLENGE

FIGHT FOR COMMUNISM · LUCHA POR EL COMUNISMO · PLP

THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST NEWSPAPER OF PROGRESSIVE LABOR PARTY

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ONLY COMMUNISM CAN SOLVE CLIMATE CRISIS



NEW YORK CITY, September 17—"Hey bosses, get off it: You pollute the world for profit! End climate change, end the bosses' reign: We need communism to stop it!" This chant along with others resounded through the streets of New York City as upwards of 75,000 marched to protest the climate crisis. Worldwide, over a million people participated in more than 500 actions in 54 countries, the largest climate protest since before the pandemic. Progressive Labor Party's (PLP) bold, decisive, and fearless message cut through the distracting reformist clutter: "The only solution is communist revolution!"

PLP was out in force. We mobilized a militant, multiracial contingent of anti-racist and communist fighters, and many of our members marched inside, and gave leadership to the contingents of other mass organizations. We came prepared with new chants highlighting the systemic/capitalist origins of the climate crisis. All told, we distributed between 700-800 CHALLENGE newspapers and 500 flyers.

Climate reform is another bosses' big lie

At a demonstration with hundreds of sponsors and many ruling-class-funded NGOs (Non-Governmental Organizations)—and co-sponsored by the arch-imperialist United Nations—the machinery of the capitalist state, specifically the liberal, Democratic Party wing of the ruling class, was on full display. It is through these many organizations and their media that this Big Fascist (See glossary, page 6) section of the ruling class can shape public opinion and control working class anger. As CHALLENGEhas pointed out repeatedly (see editorial, 9/7), their deceitful and pathetic promises of climate reform are like all their promises: LIES.

As they wrap themselves in the environmental flag, U.S. bosses led by Biden and the Big Fascists continue to approve record numbers of fossil fuel leases, in large part to fund the largest military in the world (over 800 military bases in 85 countries) to defend their empire from rising rival imperialists led by China. Their latest military expenditures bill includes another $24 billion for their proxy war in Ukraine against Russian rivals, which has already cost the U.S. working class $135 billion (not to mention its untold destruction of human life and the environment).

Continued on page 4

AOC's smoke and mirrors: A front for Big Fascists

March organizers trotted out celebrity politician Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (AOC) to give the lead-off speech at the end of the march. For all her militant sounding talk, AOC fronts for the Big Fascists by disarming and pacifying the working class, channeling our righteous anger into tightly controlled demonstrations like this one, and electoral politics. As she attempts to reassure us that "we are not going from Oil Barons to Solar Barons," that is exactly what is happening, with capitalists like phony environmentalist Al Gore becoming billionaires from their investments in renewable energy. She and her fellow "pro-Labor" Big Fascists are the same ones who voted to break the strike of railroad workers last December (see CHALLENGE 1/4). Her "incremental reformism" conceals and protects the Big Fascist bosses, who behind the scenes are carrying out their imperialist agendas, building up toward inevitable, imperialist war with rivals Russia and especially China. Falling for her fake revolutionary sloganeering leaves the working-class defenseless against this rising fascism. We cannot let this happen.

JOIN THE INTERNATIONAL FIGHT FOR COMMUNIST REVOLUTION

OUR FIGHT

✰Progressive Labor Party (PLP) fights to destroy capitalism and the dictatorship of the capitalist class. We organize workers, soldiers and youth into a revolutionary movement for communism.

✰The dictatorship of the working class — communism—can provide a lasting solution to the disaster that is today's world for billions of people. This cannot be done through electoral politics, but requires a revolutionary movement and a mass Red Army led by PLP.

✰Worldwide capitalism, in its relentless drive for profit, inevitably leads to war, fascism, poverty, disease, starvation and environmental destruction. The capitalist class, through its state power — governments, armies, police, schools and culture — maintains a dictatorship over the world's workers. The capitalist dictatorship supports, and is supported by, the anti-working-class ideologies of racism, sexism, nationalism, individualism and religion.

✰While the bosses and their mouthpieces claim "communism is dead," capitalism is the real failure for billions worldwide. Capitalism returned to Russia and China because socialism retained many aspects of the profit system, like wages and privileges. Russia and China did not establish communism.

✰Communism means working collectively to build a worker-run society. We will abolish work for wages, money and profits. While capitalism needs unemployment, communism needs everyone to contribute and share in society's benefits and burdens.

✰Communism means abolishing racism and the concept of "race." Capitalism uses racism to super-exploit Black, Latin, Asian and indigenous workers, and to divide the entire working class.

✰Communism means abolishing the special oppression of women— sexism—and divisive gender roles created by the class society.

✰Communism means abolishing nations and nationalism. One international working class, one world, one Party.

✰Communism means that the minds of millions of workers must become free from religion's false promises, unscientific thinking and poisonous ideology. Communism will triumph when the masses of workers can use the science of dialectical materialism to understand, analyze and change the world to meet their needs and aspirations.

✰Communism means the Party leads every aspect of society. For this to work, millions of workers — eventually everyone — must become communist organizers. Join Us!

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WHO WRITES FOR CHALLENGE?

CHALLENGE is for the working class, produced by the working class. The fact that CHALLENGE/PLP articles are not signed grows from PLP's criticism of the cult of the individual in the former socialist Soviet Union and China. We do not want to encourage the possibility of building up a "following" around any particular individual.
While an article may be written by one person, the final version is based on collective discussion and criticism. Many times this collective discussion even precedes an individual's writing of an article.

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Editorial

G20 Summit

U.S. has less leverage against imperialist rivals

The downward spiral of U.S. imperialism was exposed yet again at the Group of 20 (G20) Summit in New Delhi, India. European bosses, along with capitalist bosses from Latin America, Asia, and Africa, refused to back a statement blaming Russian imperialists for the war in Ukraine (Politico 9/14). Meanwhile, the Chinese and Russian heads of state snubbed the summit by sending junior officials in their place. They were busy recruiting more oil-rich, climate-hostile capitalist regimes into their BRICS alliance (grouping of of Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa), a growing threat to U.S. dominance.

The G20, founded in 1999 in the wake of economic crises in Asia, is a working group of the most powerful capitalist economies. It's dedicated to making the global profit system more stable for the capitalist class. But it was doomed to fail from the start, since any system driven by short-term maximum profit is intrinsically unstable. In a period of rising inter-imperialist rivalry and coming world war, "multilateral" coalitions like the G20 are useless for solving international crises, whether it's Covid or climate or a proxy war in Ukraine. Workers everywhere must reject all imperialists. The only side our class can afford to take is the communist side!

G20 backslide on Russia is a blow to U.S.

In addressing the U.S.-Russia proxy war in Ukraine, the world leaders wound up with a soft call for "territorial integrity" and "peace and stability"--a big step back from last year's G20, which "deplored" Russian "aggression" against Ukraine.

Ukraine's bosses rejected the resolution outright.

The reality is that the U.S. bosses no longer have the leverage to use the G20 to attack Russia (Le Monde, 9/10). As Ukraine's military counteroffensive stalls, Russian bosses are out-maneuvering sanctions by trafficking oil to the international market across the Northern Sea. Placing oil profits over workers' interests, they're using non-ice class tankers in icy waters, increasing the risk of a pollution disaster (FT, 9/15).

Imperialists jockey for influence

In an effort to shore up world leaders' confidence in the U.S., India Prime Minister Narendra Modi was ushered in to present the U.S.-backed rail-and-port deal to connect India to the Middle East and from there to Europe. This Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor is a direct challenge to the Chinese bosses' Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) (Economic Times, 9/12).

China's ruling class, playing up its strength as the world's second-largest economy, created the BRI to offer an alternative to Western debt traps for emerging capitalist economies. It provides direct investment in roads, ports, hospitals, industries, and other sectors. The debtor states' bosses, driven by their own capitalist need for profit, are more interested in securing Chinese capital loans than completing infrastructure projects (The Print, 1/27). More than ten years in and after spending $240 billion in 22 countries, the BRI has saddled these economies with enormous debt and has yet to build a whole lot of "road" or "bridges."

War and climate refugees

As the G20 trumpeted the inclusion of the African Union as a full member, thousands of workers were killed by massive flooding in Libya. In Latin America, sub-Saharan Africa, and Southeast Asia, there could be an additional 143 million climate migrants by 2050 (Brookings, 7/25/19). Capitalist corporations in cahoots with the G20 nations are responsible for 80 percent of the world's greenhouse gas emissions. But despite a summer filled with global climate disasters, the G20 killed a resolution for a more aggressive phaseout of fossil fuels (MSN, 9/11).

Kenya President William Ruto called out representatives of the world's three largest emitters: China, the U.S., and the European Union. "Those who produce the garbage," Ruto said, "refuse to pay their bills" (PBS, 9/5). But French President Emmanuel Macron punched back against "this rising state of mind" that "climate change is only the responsibility of the West" (TIME, 9/10). With the biggest emitters all addicted to short-term profits from fossil fuels, it's clear that capitalism has no solution for global warming.

The devastation of climate change is felt most by Black, Latin, and Indigenous women, men, and children. Workers can't wait for or survive on the bosses' promises. The salvation of our class will never come from capitalist rulers, but from militant fightback and communist revolution.

Communist cooperation is the only alternative

To deal with climate change, imperialist forced displacement, and the host of issues bred by capitalist accumulation and competition, Progressive Labor Party must harness the one tool that can solve the centuries-old problems wrought by the profit system: the collective genius of the working class. Once the international working class has seized state power, first on our agenda will be abolishing money, the material basis for commodity production and racist and sexist inequality.

Communist global summits will make the "last first," ensuring that regions of the world with abundant food stores and manufactured goods redistribute them to workers with less. We will enlist countless doctors, nurses, engineers, and teachers from around the world into service–without pay–to help and empower workers in every corner of the globe, and to expand human potential for all ages, from infancy to the elderly. Our meetings, conferences, and discussions today are the seeds of these future summits for our class. Join us! ✪

‘End climate change, end the bosses’reign’



From forest fires to hurricanes capitalism is to blame! From flooded cities to record droughts We’ve got to kick the bosses out

- New PLP climate chant

Continued on page 3

Workers and youth attracted to open communist chants

As has become frequent in these large demonstrations, our PLP contingent attracted outsized attention. Our booming chants were rhythmic and relentless, with multiple comrades, led by women, taking turns at the mic. We took the initiative at various points in the march to lead large numbers of people in antiracist, anti-capitalist, and openly pro-communist chants. Many gave us thumbs up and nods of agreement, and quite a few followed us or joined our contingent. At one point, we led a marathon antiracist/anti-capitalist SHUT IT DOWN! chant for a full 15 minutes, involving many hundreds of people.

As capitalism sinks further into crisis, multiple indicators show a recent uptick in class consciousness in the U.S.

As CHALLENGE has highlighted (see 7/23), strikes are on the rise. Support for unions—even with their leader’s corrupt reformist politics—is growing. Confidence in big business is at an all-time low of 15 percent. In the march itself, it was more common to hear talk of workers and the working class than in the past. Young people seem much more comfortable staking out an anti-capitalist stance. (Even march organizers admitted they had only expected 15,000 people.) And climate marches are becoming decidedly more multiracial as the racist effects of the climate crisis become more obvious by the day.

Let’s be clear though: 1) increased class consciousness is due to the unflagging efforts of communists and working class leaders over decades of class struggle (not phony liberal misleaders), and 2) it will go nowhere if we do not lead others to the next step: joining PLP and committing their lives to building communism.

Our task: Sharpen the struggle in mass organizations and build the Party!

We are active in many mass organizations. Now is the time to up our game. Virtually every mass organization now connects to the climate crisis: from schools to the factories, social services and the military, health care and immigration....It is our job to make the connections and show that the climate crisis is yet another aspect of the capitalist crisis engulfing our world and threatening human life on this planet. The urgency of our communist movement has never been more clear. It is crucial that we keep our antiracist and openly communist line front and center in these struggles inside mass organizations on both the dangers and opportunities to build our movement.✪

Letters

Reds reflect on climate march



Capitalism cannot end its toxic dependence on fossil fuels. Only a worker run communist society can solve it!

Fighting my cynicism: ‘I’m glad I went!’

When I first heard about the climate march I have to admit - I didn’t want to go. I often get very cynical when I participate in these marches. However, the Party made a push for us to participate - and I am glad they did. As school started I began to talk to students and teachers about the march. Some of the teachers were excited. One of the teachers asked why I would want to go to this. They had the same mentality as I did. We talked about how we need to rebuild the organizing culture in our school and this might be a good first step. She agreed. More importantly, we talked about how the politics of “End fossil fuels” was not enough and that we need to be there to inject more radical politics. I showed her our flyer and she enthusiastically agreed that capitalism was the problem, but she wasn’t sure that communism was the solution. In the end the Party’s push to attend forced me to think more deliberately about how I am going to organize with coworkers at my school. I have to remember that even though the bosses right now control most of these marches, they give us opportunities to build our Party. One day we will be leading thousands to not just call for an end to fossil fuels, but call for an end to capitalism with communist revolution.

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‘Looking for a political home’

After experiencing the Climate Change March through the communist contingent of Progressive Labor Party, as partners we exchanged some encouraging moments. We saw thousands of workers and students. One of us witnessed a dear comrade and PLP member fight through their fears of social anxiety and have a dialogue with a new person regarding the Pparty’s ideas of fighting back against racism, sexism and climate change, exposing truths and lies bred by capitalism. This moment made us remember that strength comes from our sharp politics and the courage starts with us the working class.

The other one of us spoke with an unemployed worker in their late twenties who mentioned that part of why they came to the march was to identify fighting organizations they could join. People were walking up to us to grab a CHALLENGE or leaflet after they heard the politics of our chants explicitly calling the bosses out. That made us think that we were doing the right thing. So many more workers and youth like that worker are looking for a political home.

By putting this need of our class over our own fears of reaching out to more workers we will open the door for masses more to find what they are looking for to smash the profit system that makes us suffer: PLP!



Workers respond to communist ideas

Our PLP contingent was organized with great chants and vitality. A group of workers from a housekeepers’ union took our flier. One pointed to the PLP logo and the word “communism” and said, “This is good.”

One Challenge seller spoke with three demonstrators who all gave their names and phone numbers to be contacted by the Party.

A contingent of Columbia University graduate student workers in the UAW chanted, “Up with the planet, down with the bosses.”

Our Party showed up and the demonstration was better for it.

For Murod & Hadi

Fight anti-Muslim racism

For Hadi, Murod, and too many other names the only justice is communism!

OAK LAWN, September 6 -- A multiracial and intergenerational group of antiracist fighters, including members of Progressive Labor Party (PLP), gathered this evening to denounce the racist Oak Lawn Police Department once again. Chants of "Justice for Hadi," and "Justice for Murod," resounded throughout the neighborhood. Murod Kurdi, a 28-year-old Arab worker was struck & killed by a white drunk driver last June. His killer was given a traffic ticket and released by one of the KKKops that had beaten and nearly killed Hadi Abuatelah last year (See CHALLENGE, 9/20). The Oak Lawn Police is an example of a growing fascist movement that marginalizes and attacks mainly Black and Brown working-class communities and immigrant workers while being used to oppress all workers.

Inside the police station, Murod Kurdi's mother Fadia Kurdi spoke about how her son was killed and how the drunk driver called her lawyer, instead of 911 to seek help for the man who had just hit with her speeding car. Fadia's testimony was abruptly stopped after three minutes, and the kkkop board would not allow her to finish her testimony. In fact, they stopped any further public comment and ordered the kkkops to escort us out of the building. Fadia's bravery is even more poignant in front of these appointed cronies who acted with malice and prejudice. We will attend the next court hearing in October of Murod's killer in solidarity with his family and friends.

There is a crystal-clear connection to the anti-Arab and anti-Muslim racist terror unleashed against workers here and on an international level. The imperialist bosses in the United States and across Europe have for generations murdered and displaced workers across the oil-rich Middle East to consolidate their power over resources, markets and labor. To achieve this, they have needed to promote a vicious racism against workers in that part of the world, to keep us divided against our common exploiters. Now as Russian and Chinese imperialists are encroaching on what was US and European bosses' sphere of influence, they need to ramp up racist terror against Arab and Muslim workers even harder to try and keep their grip.

For the imperialist bosses fighting over Latin America and Middle-East resources, land, oil and industrial might, workers' lives are cheap, here and there. Let us not fall for their racist tactics, whether they are from Trump MAGA racists or liberals who defend the racist Democratic Party which even more culpable in causing workers to be displaced all over the world.

Under capitalism, there is no justice for the working class. Justice will come when workers revolt and smash the bosses and establish a communist society free from racism and exploitation. Communism will mean the working class and its communist party will outlaw racism, sexism, and exploitation. Join us.✪



Arab, Jewish, Black, and white to smash this murderous, racist system we must unite!

Part 1

Capitalism fueled climate catastrophe

This is the introductory article of a series on climate change. Worldwide climate catastrophe is having its biggest impact on the working class, especially Black and brown workers and youth. This issue is integral to the international working-class struggle against racism, sexism and imperialism and for the revolutionary transformation of society. This means building the fight for communism- here, there, and everywhere. Our lives depend on it.

This July's global average temperature of 16.95C (62.51F) was 0.33C (0.59F) higher than the earlier record set in July 2019, when the global average temperatures hit 16.63C (61.63F). From Phoenix, Az. (July, 2023 average high of 114 degrees, low of 90 degrees) to fires in Greece to Iraq (Baghdad average high was 119 degrees) and Pakistan (still damaged by floods that occurred in 2022), the build-up of greenhouse gasses in the atmosphere has led to scorching temperatures and massive flooding. Last summer alone, heat waves in Europe killed 61,000 people and in Pakistan 1700 people died from the worst rains in decades.

Capitalism created the climate catastrophe!

Somewhere around 97% of all climate scientists in the world agree that it's not by chance that one disaster after another has been occurring over the past number of decades. What is at the core of this rapid climate change? You guessed it. The unbridled, racist and unrestrained drive for profits, that is at the center



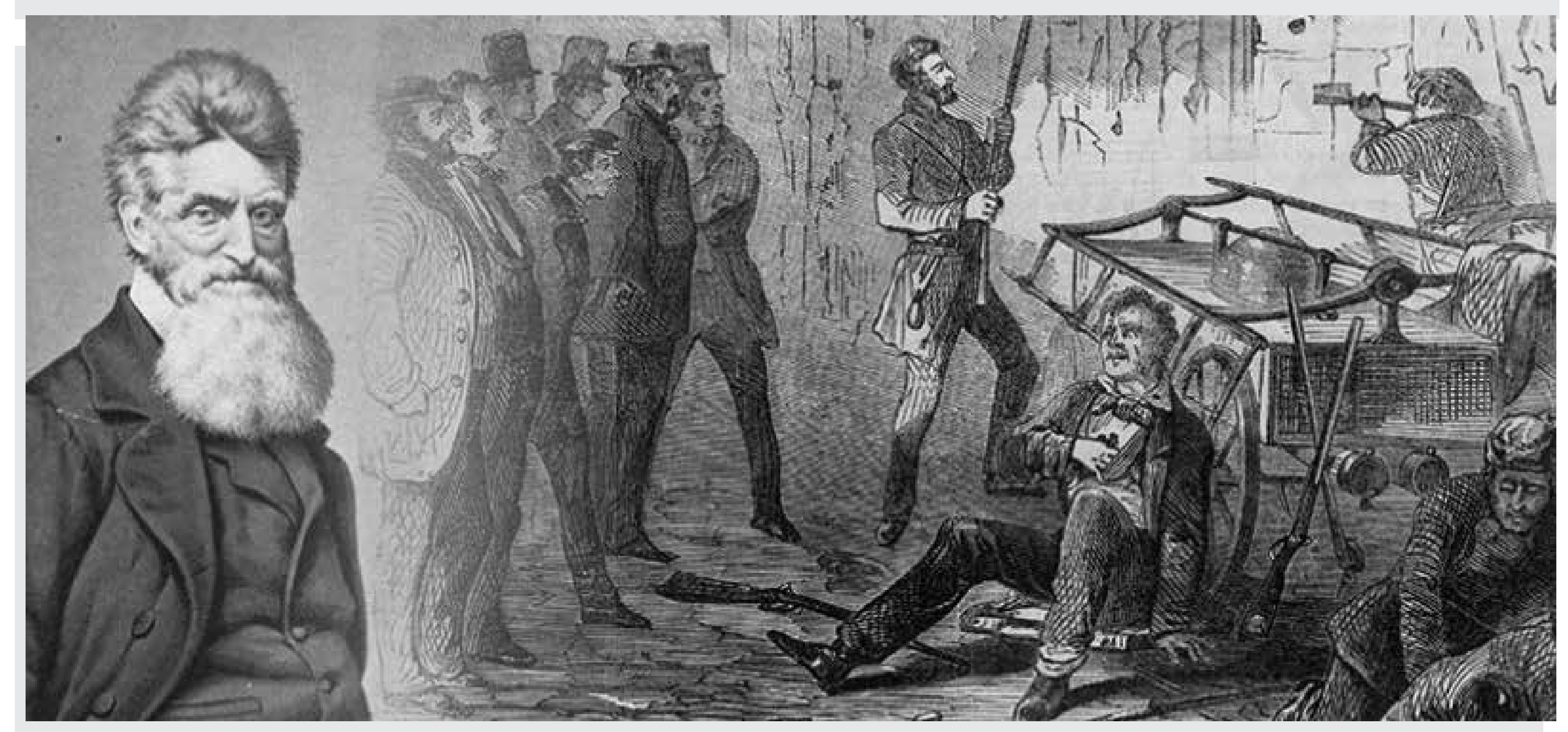
of capitalism, has led coal, gas, and oil companies to continue their exploration and extraction of fossil fuels. The political lackeys in national governments and the financial institutions that "own" them, have all reneged on their pledges to reduce carbon emissions in the name of war (Ukraine) and profits. Most of the 59.1 million people internally displaced in 2021, (virtually all poor industrial workers, agricultural workers and often people of color) according to the United Nations, were victims of climate change events. China, to put the icing on the cake, has doubled down on the use of coal, which is plentiful in their land.

Millions march to fight Against climate catastrophe!

The past year has seen eight million people involved in protests and actions around the world demanding change. Will these demonstrations be enough? The answer is no. Leaving the decision-making to capitalist governments throughout the world is like asking a zebra to change its stripes. Much of the leadership of the environmental movement is linked with so-called liberal governments or fake leftists that will mislead people into the ballot box and not challenge the fundamental cause of climate catastrophe, world-wide capitalism. The oil companies and all climate polluters have too much at stake to change course soon or at all. Future articles will discuss many aspects of climate change and discuss some possible solutions. However, one thing remains clear, as long as we allow capitalism to rule the world, we have little or no chance for a living and sustainable environment.

The Progressive Labor Party worldwide welcomes the task of providing revolutionary leadership to the climate catastrophe movement, connecting it to racism, sexism, imperialist war and the class struggle. The best hope for humanity is the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of communism throughout the world. Only then can we build a sustainable egalitarian economy that eliminates unchecked capitalist greed forever. Join us.✪

Tubman & Brown revolted against slavery with multiracial unity



This coming October 17 marks the 163rd anniversary of the raid on Harpers Ferry. A multiracial group of abolitionists led by John Brown wanted to spark an uprising against slavery that would spread throughout the South. It was a revolt showing the need for militant, antiracist, multiracial, revolutionary struggle! The fight against racist terror continues with the rebellions sparked by police murders this summer. As workers recognize the power of unity, the cops crack down harder on protests.

The Southern enslaving class was terrified by the Harpers Ferry raiders' militant, multiracial unity, a real-life rebuke of their racist stereotyping. One of the raiders' five Black freedom fighters, Osborne Anderson, described the atmosphere before-hand:

> *I have been permitted to realize to its furthest, fullest extent, the moral, mental, physical, social harmony of an Anti-Slavery family, carrying out to the letter the principle of the Anti-slavery cause. In John Brown's house, and in John Brown's presence, men from widely different parts of the continent met and united into one company, wherein no hateful prejudice dared intrude its ugly self — no ghost of a distinction found space to enter.*

From childhood, Brown vowed to fight slavery

This trust among white and Black fighters did not happen overnight. John Brown's father was a conductor on the Underground Railroad in Ohio. At 12, Brown met a fugitive enslaved boy and saw the suffering slavery had inflicted on him, influencing Brown forever. He believed Black and white workers were completely equal. He put this knowledge into action daily.

As an adult, Brown moved his family to a farm in North Elba, N.Y., near a Black community of former enslaved workers. Black sisters and brothers were regularly invited to the house for dinner with Brown's family. He addressed them as "Mr." or "Mrs.," sharply contrasting with the era's racist mores (true even among many slavery opponents).

Preparing for the raid, Brown turned to both Black and white abolitionists. In April 1858, while gathering money, arms and volunteers in Canada, he visited Harriet Tubman. She was well-known to the Black fugitive slave community there, having personally guided many to freedom. Tubman supported his plans, urging him to set July 4, 1858, for the raid and promising to bring volunteers. They agreed to communicate through their mutual friend Frederick Douglass, reaching out to Black abolitionists and former enslaved workers.

Tubman single-handedly freed 300 enslaved workers

Tubman's own experiences made her and Brown allies. Born around 1820 to enslaved parents on a Maryland plantation, Tubman performed house and field work, was subjected to physical abuse and tearfully saw many of her nine siblings sold away from the

Continued on page 7

LETTERS

We encourage all CHALLENGE readers to send in letters and articles about their experiences fighting the bosses worldwide.



To end anti-migrant racism we must smash all borders with communist revolution

Fight vs anti-migrant racism grows

As reported in the last CHALLENGE, racists have been demonstrating against the housing of refugee asylum seekers in a former Catholic school on Staten Island. Led by attention-seeking "racist" Scott LoBaido and supported by Staten Island politicians of both parties, the racists have been verbally attacking the refugees-many from Latin American and West African countries- with vile epithets, frightening some of them so much that they asked to be moved to a different shelter.

After a Progressive Labor Party (PLP) member learned on Monday, August 28th, of the hate rally to be held on that evening, he notified the Party leadership, who quickly organized a pro-migrant support rally to confront the racists. More than 30 comrades and friends, including a couple of antiracists from the neighborhood, marched to the shelter, formerly St. John Villa School, chanting loudly in support of the refugees. Outside the shelter, we spoke on a bullhorn to let the migrants know that we were there to support them, not to attack them. We let the racists know that we were communists, and that we would be back in growing numbers.

The racists announced another hate rally for Tuesday, September 5th. Some Party members learned about the racists' march from friends in Peace Action Staten Island (PASI). PASI endorsed the next migrant support rally to counter the racists. A leaflet was quickly disseminated. Antiracists from Staten Island and Brooklyn gathered at a predetermined location and marched to the rally point at the shelter. Again, we shouted encouragement to the refugees.

One of the talking points of the racists had been that there was a school with girls very near the shelter, and that they could be in danger from the male migrants. We discovered that an alumna of that school, St. Joseph Hill, had garnered over 200 alumni signatures on a petition supporting the migrants and condemning the racists. Then, on Thursday, September 7, a group of immigration organizers and leaders of faith-based organizations attempted to hold a press conference outside the shelter in support of the refugees. According to news reports, the racists drowned them out so that few of them could be heard.

So, it appears that support for the migrants is growing on Staten Island, but the racists still dominate the scene. What is clear is that if it had not been for us communists in PLP, the racists would have had a clear field for their hate. We were the spark. Whenever racism and fascism rear their ugly heads, communists must organize to chop them off. To paraphrase what one of the participants in the latest rally said, "I just want to be able to come back with more numbers than they have!" That is what we will continue to build on Staten Island - an antiracist movement to shut the racists down.

★★★★★

Big Fascists undermine workers' education

At a community college in rural northwestern New Jersey, Sussex County Community College (SCCC), self-styled "progressive" administrators actively undermine front-line faculty members who fight for workers to receive a decent education.

In a resignation letter from the start of the fall semester, an accomplished student counselor outlined the problems at SCCC: 1) The condescending racism that the Latin counselor faced from his supposedly enlightened liberal colleagues, 2) Disconnected senior faculty and administrators who didn't listen to faculty "below" them who actually interacted with students on a daily basis, 3) The lack of initiative to solicit student feedback — all pointing to one conclusion. Senior level faculty and administration at the college, who claim to be enlightened progressives, are more interested in their own careers than helping students.

This counselor had struggled heroically to keep working class students in school in spite of the horrendous material conditions that capitalism imposes on them. He succeeded against all odds -- only to have his more senior colleagues undermine him at every turn.

In a classic example of bourgeois individualism, other faculty members grew jealous of the relationships that he had worked so hard to cultivate with students. These more senior faculty demanded that he send more of his students to them for future counseling needs — regardless of who the students themselves actually wanted to talk to. When he refused, his supposedly "progressive" bosses at the College stripped his position of any student-facing activities, relegating this talented counselor to administrative busy work.

This, combined with the lack of support for frontline faculty who directly help students, the racism shown by more senior faculty towards an increasingly diverse student population, and the smug and condescending attitude towards his important mission to help working-class students, was too much for him to bear and he resigned.

While it's sad to see such a talented staff member leave due to egregious burnout, his resignation letter points to a silver lining. It is the students and frontline faculty and staff themselves who can carry the struggle forward and secure decent education for workers in rural New Jersey. If they are unified in their cause and armed with the Party's level of analysis and dedication, they will be unstoppable!

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Firefighters die defending the bosses profits: A tribute to Augie and Bear

On July 5th, two firemen from the Newark Fire Department were trapped and killed fighting a fire that started aboard a cargo ship bound for West Africa from Port Newark, NJ. The cargo ship was filled with over 1200 new and used cars and approximately 157 shipping containers (NJ Spotlight News).Augusto "Augie" Acabou and Wayne "Bear" Brooks entered the ship along with their captain and other firefighters. They reportedly found and extinguished the fire, but upon their way back out Augie and Bear became disoriented and trapped, and died. The ship's crew had been completely evacuated prior to the firefighters entering. There were no lives in danger aboard the ship, but firefighters were still sent in to risk their lives to protect burning cars that will likely be replaced. The families want answers.

At a tribute to the firefighter's lives held at a shopping mall New Jersey on August 8, Bear's widow stated "He went in there to put out a fire to save materialistic things, not a person, not a human being - materialistic things. And he never came home" (Abc7ny.com, 8/23).

Urban firefighters are sent in to risk their lives to protect the bosses' property and businesses. In cities like Newark, fires occur predominantly in Black neighborhoods, many of which are neglected due to decades of class war against Black workers and gentrification led by self-serving politicians like Newark's fake leftist mayor Ras Baraka. Meanwhile, in wealthy communities, fire suppression systems are relatively efficient and adequate.

In a society led by and for the working class - a communist society - workers can take the lead on building the safest housing conditions to prevent fires from starting in the first place. Workers can discuss how to approach extinguishing fires with minimal loss to human life and the damage to the environment.

Only a revolution led by the working class can bring about the freedom to do this. For all workers like Augie and Bear, for the countless firefighters that die every year protecting the property for the blood sucking landlord class and banks, workers must build a dedicated party whose primary objective is to smash capitalism and rid society of the profit system that will gladly exterminate the workers to preserve their wealth.

When I first heard about the climate march I have to admit - I didn't want to go. I often get very cynical when I participate in these marches. However, the Party made a push for us to participate - and I am glad they did. As school started I began to talk to students and teachers about the march. Some of the teachers were excited. One of the teachers asked why I would want to go to this. They had the same mentality as I did. We talked about how we need to rebuild the organizing culture in our school and this might be a good first step. She agreed. More importantly, we talked about how the politics of "End fossil fuels" was not enough and that we need to be there to inject more radical politics. I showed her our flyer and she enthusiastically agreed that capitalism was the problem, but she wasn't sure that communism was the solution. In the end the Party's push to attend forced me to think more deliberately about how I am going to organize with coworkers at my school. I have to remember that even though the bosses right now control most of these marches, they give us opportunities to build our Party. One day we will be leading thousands to not just call for an end to fossil fuels, but call for an end to capitalism with communist revolution.

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Natural disasters or capitalist genocide?

Reading the editorial on the Maui fires, there seems to be a link between the wildfires in the forests of Canada. While these fires are labeled as 'natural' disasters, but the real issue is the capitalism and it's continual genocide of indigenous workers. Corporations and their sugar plantations played a large role in depleting the water sources, as sugar is a very water intensive crop. Water is crucial to Hawaiian cultural practices and they believed that water couldn't be owned, that it belonged to all. I am seeing a connection between the fires in Maui and Canada and the forest fires that occurred in Brazil and Australia a few years ago. These fires led to the displacement of many indigenous communities. In the case of Brazil, the burning of the Amazon forest was set by the Brazilian ruling class to make way for their agribusiness. Prior to that, an Amazonian tribe had won a court case to halt the cutting down of the Amazon forest. If we're going to discuss climate change, we need to include the role of indigenous workers and the ongoing legacy of colonialism into these topics.

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Tubman & Brown

To abolish slavery, we needed militant multiracial unity

Continued from page 5

family. In her teens, Tubman suffered a broken skull from brutal plantation life. Her "owner" tried selling her as "damaged goods." Instead she fled, walking for several weeks, mostly at night, the 90 miles to Philadelphia via the Underground Railroad. She returned shortly afterwards, guiding her family out of slavery to Canada. And that was just the beginning.

Over the following 11 years, with a bounty on her head, Tubman made approximately 13 trips south and guided an estimated 300 enslaved workers to freedom in Canada. This resolute, daring revolutionary declared, "I never ran my train off the tracks and I never lost a passenger." Tubman warmly endorsed Brown's armed struggles in Kansas against the pro-slavery gangs. Brown, in turn, knew Tubman's courage, militancy, and knowledge of the land and Underground Railroad network, and felt Tubman would be invaluable in executing their plans to free the enslaved by any means necessary. He always addressed her as "General Tubman." Both believed in direct action and armed violence to end slavery.

Tubman became ill and could not bring her forces to Harpers Ferry, but her work inspired the rest of the raiders. Tubman's example, like that of Osborne Anderson and the other Black raiders, discredited the image of Black people as passive victims, terrifying the southern enslavers and politicians, and inspired the abolitionist movement.

Black rebels petrified enslavers

To those today who say workers won't fight oppression, the stubborn facts of history show struggle is universal. The enslavers, although talking of "docile" Black workers, knew this well. They were petrified of potential Black rebels and of "outside agitators." They patrolled all night with dogs and guns to intimidate their enslaved work- ers and to keep Yankees and abolitionist literature away from them.

Today the "outside agitators" are Progressive Labor Party (PLP) communists, fighting to abolish racist capitalism. The bosses assure us that the impoverished working class is too ground down, too alienated to fight back collectively, saying workers hate communism. Yet they organize cops, plant security, the Minutemen, Black nationalists and sellout union "leaders" to try to keep communists out, and instantly fire them when they're discovered in a factory. Why are they afraid if the working class is supposed to be so passive?

Today, uniting to fight the mutual class enemy is one of the main ways people of different backgrounds are able to overcome the "natural" segregation capitalist society promotes. Brown and Tubman demonstrated that racist and nationalist ideas cannot be overcome primarily inside one's head. It requires material change in the way one lives. Among the Black and militant white abolitionists, multiracial unity developed over years of working together, getting to know each other while struggling over their differences.

Today, U.S. capitalism has created its own contradictions. Workers still often live in neighbor- hoods separated by "race" but many are integrated within their workplaces and schools. The bosses try to divide us there as well, with racist job classifications and different types of bourgeois culture to keep workers apart (e.g., soul "versus" country music). Nevertheless, workers rub shoulders every day. Class-conscious workers in PLP must develop these acquaintances into friendships and unbreakable bonds in struggle.

Class struggle trumps racism

As in Tubman and Brown's time, racism permeates society. But rebellions and strikes reveal multiracial unity and struggle against the bosses. At the Smithfield Ham Factory in Tarheel, NC, for example, a 15-year unionization fight witnessed intense intimidation from the bosses to scare workers from signing union cards. But by organizing support from grocery workers from far and wide, Smithfield workers felt part of a larger community. When the bosses got immigration agents to raid the plant, targeting Latin workers for deportation, the workers saw through this divisive trick and, in November 2006, 500 marched out in a two-day strike protesting this raid, forcing the company to rehire all the fired immigrant workers!

In 2008 in the Bronx, NY, the Stella D'Oro workers went on strike for 11 months. These immigrant workers from across the world, men and women, overcame differences and stuck together. Not one worker crossed the picket line! PLP had organized friends, comrades, teachers and students onto the picket lines, bringing solidarity and communist leadership. PLP members steadfastly stood in solidarity with the strikers via donations, rallies and marches, and supported their fight against plant closure. The fight against police brutality is a protracted class war still being waged today. The militant antiracist fightback against the kkkops—who stole the lives of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Jacob Blake, and countless others—are glimmers of the revolutionary potential of the working class.

It is the same war left unfinished by Tubman and Brown. John Brown's raid and Harriet Tubman's courage in freeing 300 slaves along the Underground Railroad teach us many lessons that are valuable to antiracists today. First, militancy was foremost in their thinking. Tubman declared she would never return to being a slave, that she would rather die fighting. Brown, after fighting in Kansas, realized that only bloodshed could end slavery. Many workers agreed with them, especially after the 1857 Dred Scott decision legalizing slavery nationwide.

The second is that multiracial unity is essential in any fight. Black workers escaping from enslavement received needed help from white abolitionists to reach the North. Thousands of workers, Black and white, helped escaping slaves along their journeys and defended them when attacked by slave-catchers. These workers attended public meetings, donated money, passed word to their friends and helped harbor fugitive slaves.

PLP does similar things today. We discuss political struggles and the vital need for multiracial unity against the racist system with friends, coworkers and neighbors. We urge them to join in militant antiracist demonstrations, build a multiracial base with fellow workers or donate to CHALLENGE. Every time someone we know does one of these simple acts, they're making a political commitment in the fight against racism, capitalism and imperialism, just as thousands of anti-slavery porters did against slavery—taking small steps to serve and defend those who had escaped slavery as well as those who fought it directly.

Join Progressive Labor Party

We invite all workers, soldiers and students who participate in these struggles to join Progressive Labor Party. Today's supporters of antiracist struggle understand — just as did the thousands backing Brown and Tubman 161 years ago — that revolutionaries, like the raiders then and PLP now, are the honest, reliable leaders in struggle. When direct action is required, they know to whom to turn. CHALLENGE constantly reports workers being won to militancy and multiracial unity in struggles against the racist bosses, hailing those joining our ranks. Step by step, the communist movement will grow and lead the working class to revolution and a new world based on members of our class mutually meeting each other's needs, without racist bosses and their profit system.✪



RED EYE ON THE NEWS . . .

U.S. agents struggle to keep Colombia in the fold of their decaying empire

Foreign Affairs, 9/13–For many observers of Colombia, it is hard to imagine that a former member of M-19, the guerrilla group that waged war against the state for nearly two decades, could attain the presidency. Yet in 2022...Gustavo Petro, a former M-19 organizer...ascended to the country's highest office. Despite Petro's populist and at times anti-U.S. rhetoric, the Biden administration has since made overtures to the new president...the United States may be hoping to prevent Colombia from falling into China's orbit. But as Petro begins his second year in office, Washington's charm offensive is yielding diminishing returns. For one thing, Plan Colombia, a security and antidrug cooperation package that has been the linchpin of the U.S.-Colombian relationship for nearly a quarter century, looks increasingly obsolete. Signed in 2000, the joint initiative helped quell Colombia's guerrilla war and arguably prevented the country from becoming a failed state, and it has been backed by more than $12 billion in funding...But Petro has opposed Plan Colombia since its inception...

Haiti-D.R. diplomacy rises to level of guns and tanks

Al Jazeera, 9/14–The Dominican Republic will close its entire border with neighbouring Haiti later this week, President Luis Abinader has announced, as a conflict over the construction of a canal from a shared river worsens. "Unfortunately, they left us no alternative but to take drastic measures," Abinader told reporters...He added that even if the Haitian government...could not control the construction of the canal, his country could. "We have been prepared for weeks, not only for this situation but also for a possible peace force in Haiti," Abinader said.

Officials in the Dominican Republic say the project will divert water from the Massacre River, which runs in both countries, and violate the 1929 Treaty of Peace, Friendship and Arbitration...Haiti's government had said on Wednesday that it met with Dominican officials in the Dominican Republic that day to try to resolve the canal dispute...On Thursday, the Dominican Republic said the looming border closure was set to include all land, sea and air routes. It also said it deployed a further 20 armoured vehicles to a military camp on the border.

U.S. and Chinese bosses continue fight over who gets Pakistan

The Intercept, 8/9–The U.S. State Department encouraged the Pakistani government in a March 7, 2022, meeting to remove Imran Khan as prime minister over his neutrality on the Russian invasion of Ukraine, according to a classified Pakistani government document obtained by The Intercept. The meeting, between the Pakistani ambassador to the United States and two State Department officials, has been the subject of intense scrutiny, controversy, and speculation in Pakistan over the past year and a half, as supporters of Khan and his military and civilian opponents jockeyed for power. The political struggle escalated on August 5 when Khan was sentenced to three years in prison on corruption charges and taken into custody for the second time since his ouster...The sentence also blocks Khan, Pakistan's most popular politician, from contesting elections expected in Pakistan later this year.

French bosses back down slightly on mission "Occupy Niger"

France24, 9/14–"France welcomes the liberation of Stephane Jullien," said a spokeswoman for the [French foreign] ministry. Jullien, a businessman long based in Niger, had a role representing the interests of French expatriates at the French embassy. He was arrested on September 8 amid deteriorating ties that followed a coup in the former French colony in West Africa. France had announced his detention on Tuesday and called for his "immediate release". Relations between Niger and France went swiftly downhill after the July 26 putsch, which ousted French ally president Mohamed Bazoum. Paris, which has about 1,500 troops deployed in Niger...has stood by Bazoum and declared the post-coup authorities illegitimate. There has been speculation that France will be forced into a full military pullout from Niger, with a French defence ministry source saying last week that the French army was holding talks with Niger's military over withdrawing "elements" of its presence.

STRIKERS PUTS BREAKS ON AUTO BOSSES

ABOLISH WAGE SYSTEM, WORKERS NEED STATE POWER



PLP calls on Ford, GM, and Stellani workers to fight for communism where our class needs will be met.

About 13,000 GM, Ford and Stellantis workers are on strike in what is being called "the first strike against all the 'Big 3'" and "the biggest auto strike in decades." Yet, as of this writing, only 10 percent of the workers are striking and 90 percent are working with no contract (the expired contract was not extended).

Against the backdrop of 100,000 striking TV and screenwriters and actors in the WGA and SAG-AFTRA, a spike in strikes and organizing around the U.S., the mood of the workers is changing. After the "summer of strikes," the pro-capitalist union leaders and politicians have a tiger by the tail! In the recent contract struggles involving 120,000 railroad workers and 350,000 UPS workers, Biden and the union leaders were able to kill the strikes before they happened! Workers are not yet able to break away from the liberal politicians and union misleaders.

Joe Biden, who calls himself, "the most pro-union President ever," was one of the architects of the 2008 bailout that reaped $250 billion in profits for the auto bosses while auto workers saw their real wages drop by 20 percent. These concessions helped GM, Ford, and Stellantis pocket $250 billion in profits over the past decade, with the three CEOs increasing their pay by 40 percent, with each one now making between $25-$29 million annually (Economics Policy Institute).

Biden recently forced a national contract on railroad workers that they had overwhelmingly rejected, and he quickly dispatched Labor Secretary Julie Su to Detroit to resolve the strike, reflecting the larger issues at stake. One, is the transition to electric vehicles (EVs). Another is winning a loyal industrial workforce as the U.S. escalates the proxy war with Russia in Ukraine and prepares for a possible conflict with China.

The strike comes as the bosses are investing billions to develop EVs while facing stiff competition from Tesla and international challengers. China is the #1 producer of EVs in the world and Hyundai will soon build electric vehicles at a new factory in Georgia. John Casesa, who previously headed strategy at Ford said, "The transition to EVs is dominating every bit of this discussion." (NYT, 9/16).

The transition from gasoline engines to EVs could affect millions of jobs as traditional auto plants that produce engines, mufflers, catalytic converters, fuel injectors and other components will be retooled or shut down. One of the main goals of the UAW is to get the auto bosses to agree to have the new battery and EV factories, many of them joint ventures with smaller companies, covered by the national labor contract. The union also wants to regain the right to strike over plant shutdowns.

The new "reform" leadership of the UAW, elected by an unenthusiastic 10 percent of the membership, has got a laundry list of demands they have no intention of winning, including a 40 percent wage hike, a shorter work week, and abolishing the multi-tiered wage system. They say they want to reverse concessions that they and the old leadership gave up over the past decades in order to keep the auto bosses competitive with their international rivals. The auto companies have proposed a 20 percent wage hike over four years.

In 2019, the UAW led a 40-day strike at GM while the International President and a slew of national officers were either under federal investigation or on their way to prison for bribery and other corruption charges. Then as now, the strike is at least in part, an attempt to consolidate the membership around the leadership.

For our members and friends of Progressive Labor Party, the main lesson of this current upsurge is that we must not let this moment pass us by. Comrades and readers of CHALLENGE working in auto and Amazon, at UPS and in mass transit are in a key position to fight for the political leadership of the workers. At its core, this fight is reform vs. revolution.

As Marx pointed out in "Value, Price and Profit," we cannot restrict ourselves to fighting over contracts and grievances, to what he called the "unavoidable guerilla fights," that spring up from the ongoing class war. "Instead of the conservative motto, 'A fair day's wage for a fair day's work!' [we] ought to inscribe on [our] banner the revolutionary watchword, 'Abolish the wage system!'" ✪

WRITE FOR CHALLENGE!

CHALLENGE strives to be the communist paper for and by the international working class. We call on all readers, supporters, and comrades to submit class struggle articles, analytical pieces, original photos and graphics, letters, and political cartoons.

The next deadline is night of Friday, September 29

Send to desafio.challenge@gmail.com. For some guidance and house style rules, please go to www.bit.ly/338ZJow

All submissions are open to collective discussion, struggle, and change. See sidebar on page 2 about fighting for collectivity and against a cult of the individual.

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